

Collection Development Policy

I General Statement of Philosophy

A. Library Mission Statement

The mission of the Robbins Library is to be a vital community resource, cost-effectively providing residents with a broad range of materials, information and services.

The library will provide information and answers to questions on a wide variety of topics related to work, school and personal life through print, online databases, the Internet and other resources and will assist patrons in developing the skills needed to find and evaluate information sources effectively.

The library will nurture the love of reading in children and will provide materials and services, which support formal learning and the desire for personal growth and development for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The library will maintain a high quality collection of current materials to meet residents' desires for leisure reading, listening and viewing and for recreational and cultural enrichment.

The library will create a welcoming and inviting environment for accessing library resources, interacting with others in the community and attending community meeting and events.

B. Statement of Purpose

In order to meet this mission, the Robbins Library's collection must provide a wide range of materials for users of all ages, all educational levels and all socioeconomic backgrounds. The library acts to fulfill its mission by selecting, acquiring, organizing, preserving, maintaining, and providing access to a collection of print, non-print, and electronic resources that address the interests and needs of the members of a diverse community.

The purpose of the Robbins Library Collection Development Policy is to guide librarians and to inform the public about the principles of collection development.

A policy cannot replace the judgment of librarians, but stating goals and indicating boundaries will assist them in choosing from a vast array of available materials.

C. Defining Collection Development

“Collection Development” refers to an ongoing process of assessing the materials available for purchase or licensing, and making decisions on their inclusion and retention. Librarians examine the existing collection, consult with colleagues and use professional journals and other selected sources regarding acquisitions. (See Selection Tools, Part V, Section C)

II Community Overview

Arlington, founded over 350 years ago, remains proud of its history even as it has become a modern community. The birthplace of Uncle Sam, the location of the first public children’s library to offer continuous service, and the site of most of the fighting when the British marched through it returning from the Old North Bridge at the start of the Revolutionary War, Arlington has preserved many of its historical buildings and even recreated the town common. Once a thriving agriculture and mill town, Arlington’s convenient access to metropolitan Boston has made it a very desirable place to live.

Arlington’s diverse population has demanded the good schools, libraries and recreation facilities that make it attractive to families. Commercial development lines Massachusetts Avenue, which traverses the Mill Brook valley. Residences are located on the flat former agricultural land in East Arlington or on slopes on either side of the east-west “Mass. Ave.” corridor. In 1993 townspeople instituted a visioning process called Vision 2020 to further articulate the community’s goals with regard to population diversity, education, business, care for the environment, encouragement of culture, and citizen involvement as it adapts to ever-changing times.

The Robbins Library is a public facility supported through municipal funding from the residents of the Town of Arlington. The Arlington community includes people from diverse educational, cultural and economic backgrounds displaying a wide variety of interests, needs, values, viewpoints and occupations.

Materials are selected and services planned to satisfy residents both as individuals and as members of groups with a concern for all ages, backgrounds, interests, abilities and levels of education. The library has the obligation not only to serve its current users but also to search for materials and methods that will meet the needs of new members of the community and those who have not been traditional library users. Continuous and periodic

examination of the community and its changing needs is necessary to give purpose, vitality and relevancy to the selection of materials.

Data from the 2010 Census shows that 25% of Arlington's population is under the age of twenty-five; and 15% is 65 or older. Families occupy close to 60% of the total households. Arlington is highly educated; according to 2007-2011 American Community Survey estimates, 95% of the 25+ population has a high school degree and over 60% has a college degree. Seventeen percent of the community speaks a language at home other than English although only 4% speak English less than "very well." Sixty-four percent of the population are in management, business, science or arts professions and 20% have sales or office positions. The median household income is \$85,059, with only 4% of households below poverty level.

The library is important to members of the community who have special needs or whose native language is not English. As a result, special materials and formats will be selected with those segments of the community in mind.

The economic development of the community is crucial to maintaining the quality of town services. Arlington is a community of small businesses who require business-related information in order to make sound decisions and plans. It is vital that the library select materials to meet their needs so that they will develop and sustain successful businesses.

III Selection Criteria (not in priority order)

A. General

- The extent to which the item supplements, expands upon, or supports the existing collection.
- Popular demand.
- Relevance to observed and anticipated community needs and desires.
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, creator or publisher of the work.
- Local importance of the author or creator of the work.
- Cost relative to the value the item contributes to the collection.
- Availability of similar material within the community and area libraries.
- Durable binding/paper.
- Formats suited to making the collection accessible by all.

B. Content

- Comprehensiveness of treatment.
- Accuracy and timeliness of the information.
- Organization and style appropriate and appealing to library's users.
- Representation of important movements, subjects, genres, or trends of local, regional or national significance.
- Historical value.

IV Materials

A. Non-Fiction

The Library believes that the foundation of a strong non-fiction collection is built by choosing books and other materials in all subjects for their lasting and/or current value, with careful attention paid to the needs, interests and demands of the users. The Library selects items based upon the quality of a work as a whole, and not on the basis of a particular section of that work.

B. Fiction

Collecting in fiction is driven mainly by popular demand; the need to maintain a core collection of classics that are read from generation to generation; the importance of gathering as many major writers as possible and to insure that Arlington authors are represented in the collection.

Arlington's fiction reading public require bestsellers, literary novels and classics in equal measure. Their taste for contemporary authors is strong and many request titles they learn about through various media outlets. The library is interested in getting as many copies of bestsellers to patrons as possible and purchases 1 copy for every 3-4 reserves via the Minuteman Network's alert service.

C. Reference

The Library evaluates all reference sources for their authoritativeness, relevance to current issues and curriculum, patron demand, long term value, and cost.

While the library continues to maintain the print reference collection, it is careful to weigh the relative value of purchasing any work against the possibility of viewing the same information electronically as either a free or subscription database. Often, Internet sites provide the up-to-date content not available in a

published work that is critical to a user's needs.

D. eResources (Electronic Resources)

The Library's goal is to provide information resources available via the Internet on a subscription basis either through joint purchases with the Minuteman Library Network or individually.

Joint purchases keep costs down and ensure ease of use by library patrons. The following criteria apply: price of electronic format, remote access capability, authority, accuracy, anticipated demand, impact upon staff for ongoing maintenance, training requirements for staff/public, and licensing fees and usage restrictions.

F. Local History

Reference materials are acquired for the Historical Collection that pertains to the history of the town of Arlington, Middlesex County, or Massachusetts and its towns. Genealogical materials, particularly those relevant to New England genealogy, are also collected. Selected town and state documents and reports are acquired for the Historical Collection. Materials, whether purchased or donated, include books, diaries, yearbooks, reports, directories, maps, atlases, pamphlets, letters, speeches, minutes, slides, prints, photographs, postcards, films, video recordings, sound recordings, old ledgers, memorabilia and ephemera. Three-dimensional objects are not collected or accepted as donations.

G. Magazines and Newspapers

Magazine subscriptions continue to be a vital part of the library experience for many individuals. Patrons enjoy coming in to sit in the Reading Room to peruse a well-rounded assortment of popular titles as well as specialized topics.

The titles selected for the collection will be available either as browsing or circulating copies in the Reading room and/or the Reference area. Magazine titles are generally retained in public areas for the most recent 12 issues, and for 5 years in storage. There are a number of titles archived for longer periods in hard copy format and on microfilm.

H. Music Recordings

The overall goal is to represent all genres of music.

The Library has retained over 3000 record (LP) albums of classical, folk, pop and rock music that are unique, have historical value or

substantially contribute to the depth of the collection in some way.

I. Spoken Word Recordings (Compact disc, Playaway, and downloadable)

The spoken word collection is extremely popular and in constant demand. Unabridged items are the recording of choice. However, we will select from among many abridged materials if no full version is available.

The Library collects novels, mysteries, adventures, best sellers, classics of literature and myriad non-fiction topics. Factors to be considered in choosing the best spoken word recordings are: popularity, quality of readers' voices, and quality of recording. Availability of replacement discs is an important consideration.

J. DVDs

The DVD collection is comprised of Hollywood, independent and foreign feature films, television shows, documentaries and educational productions, music and dance performances, and other nonfiction DVDs on such popular subjects as exercise, history, and travel. Selection criteria are as follows:

Feature films to meet the viewing demands and interests of various age groups will be considered for purchase. Contemporary movies, classics, television shows, and films receiving Academy Award nominations or other national/international recognition will be considered for purchase.

Materials that are primarily designed for classroom use and those of a highly technical or industrial nature will not be purchased. Educational materials on relevant topics that are designed for individual use but may have classroom applications will be considered.

Feature films rated NC-17 and above will not be purchased.

K. Young Adults

Young Adult materials are separately identified with the goal of a smooth transition from children's materials to the general collection. Through carefully chosen materials and through individual and group guidance, young adults are introduced to the library's complete resources and encouraged to continue using them.

The Young Adult collections are chosen for patrons of about 11-18 years of age, with awareness of the variety of interests, backgrounds, reading skills, and development levels within this

age group. The collections are for browsing and are designed for the teenager, not in his/her role as student, but rather to satisfy his/her special recreational, emotional and informational needs. Reference resources are available in the Reference department and through the Library website, many of which are specifically selected with this age group in mind.

Non-fiction materials for the curriculum and other topical areas are ordered as well and shelved with adult materials with a “YA” sticker on the spine.

The Library fosters a close relationship with the schools and engages in direct contact with middle and high school librarians and teachers. Summer Reading list material is purchased in 5-10 copies or more to support the students and schools.

L. Materials Not Collected

As a rule, the Library does not buy textbooks used by the local schools, college or universities, as it is the responsibility of the libraries of those institutions to provide copies of these course materials to their students. Textbooks will however be purchased in those subject areas where there is little material in any other format.

V Selection Process

A. Responsibility for Selection

Ultimate responsibility for all library policy lies with the Board of Trustees. Final responsibility for selection of materials rests with the Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees. The Head of Adult Services, Head of Children’s Services, and the Branch Librarian are responsible for overseeing collection management. All professional librarians have collection development responsibilities for specific subject areas and formats.

Every effort is made within the region and the state to promote and participate in cooperative programs for the interlibrary loan of scholarly, specialized, costly or seldom used materials. The Robbins Library system is a member of the Minuteman Library Network (MLN) automated resource-sharing consortium.

B. Community Participation

Involvement by the community in the selection process is encouraged. Several mechanisms are used for garnering and

assessing the interests of our patrons including: analysis of pending reserve requests, purchase suggestions submitted by library users and questionnaires and surveys administered by the library. User suggestions for purchase will be evaluated in accordance with the Collection Development Policy.

C. Selection Tools

Among the sources used by librarians for selection of materials are professional library journals, including but not limited to Library Journal, Booklist, Kirkus Reviews, and School Library Journal. Trade journals, subject bibliographies, publishers' promotional materials and reviews from reputable sources expand the search process. It is also the responsibility of each selector to be aware of and examine local publications, the media, and reliable Internet sources. Browsing local bookstores with good displays is also encouraged as an additional method to gather material that is popular and topical.

VI Preservation and Maintenance

A. Preservation

The library treats seriously the importance of a collection that reflects the past as well as the present. The library takes care of those materials that have longstanding value. The profession continues to develop many ways to do this. Currently the library may do preservation photocopying with acid free paper, microfilming (still considered the best long-term solution for many materials), encapsulation, digitizing, rebinding, de-acidifying, custom reprinting and restriction of use.

Preservation also means training all staff to safeguard the physical integrity of books and other materials to insure their longevity. This includes learning how to handle books, encouraging patrons to do the same, cleaning them, shelving and storing them properly. Deterioration of materials is a constant challenge for the library community and the library monitors the newest retention and preservation methods in its role as guardian of the documentary memory of the Arlington community.

B. Replacement/Retention

Content, use, condition and inherent value determine whether materials should be retained. Material formats that disintegrate but which are highly desirable are rebound or replaced if possible. Likewise, new revelations and changes in culture critically alter many fields of knowledge. As demand decreases, these items are

selectively withdrawn from the collection. An item that is damaged or lost is often replaced if still popular. Librarians utilize special circulation and lost item reports to make these determinations.

C. De-acquisition

De-acquisition, or weeding and discarding materials from the collection, occurs on a systematic basis and is necessitated by limitations of space, obsolescence of material, lack of use over extended period of time, physical condition of the item, and acquisition of new materials; the same criteria that are applied to the purchase of new books will be applied to the discarding and weeding of books.

VII Reconsideration of Library Materials

A. Intellectual Freedom

The Library makes available a wide diversity of ideas and viewpoints in support of an informed citizenry and a democratic society. The library supports the individual choice and judgment of its users in seeking information, and upholds the freedom of library users to read, view, and listen.

Decisions to select or retain an item are based on the merits of each work or information source as it relates to the goals and coverage of the collection. The library considers the values of each item in its entirety and within the context of the collection, not on specific passages or sections in the item itself. Materials are not marked, labeled, or sequestered to show approval, disapproval, or judgment as to suitability or content for particular audiences. Materials are not excluded, removed, altered, or suppressed because of their creators' origin, background, or views, or because they represent a particular aspect of life, frankness of expression, or controversial subject matter.

Inclusion of an item does not constitute endorsement of its content by the Library Board. While a person may reject materials for him/herself and his/her children, he/she may not restrict access to the material by others. Selection of materials for adults is not constrained by possible exposure to children or young adults. Responsibility for children's use of library collections rests with their parents, guardians, or caregivers.

B. Reconsideration Procedures

Library users occasionally object to titles that have been selected for the collection. Persons seeking the reconsideration of a book,

video, compact disc, or other item are asked to complete a “Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials” form, available at the Reference Desk. The library, upon receipt of a completed form, reviews the item for inclusion in the collection in light of the library’s overall objectives, its Collection Development Policy, the Library Bill of Rights, and ALA guidelines on intellectual freedom. The Library Director will respond in writing to the patron.

VIII Special Formats

New formats will be considered for the collection when industry reports, review articles and local requests indicate that a significant portion of the community has the necessary technology to make use of the new format. The following factors must be taken into consideration when deciding whether to add a new format to the collection: availability, cost and the library’s ability to acquire, process and circulate the items in each format.

IX Special Collections

A. Local History

Please see part IV Materials above.

B. Foreign Languages

The Library serves Chinese patrons in Arlington who total about 3% of the population and are heavy library users. Nearby communities have even larger populations. The Chinese collections consist of primarily major Chinese classic and contemporary Chinese best sellers. Other topics are variable, but include biographies, religion, cookbooks, how-to books, Chinese translations of American best sellers and a Chinese newspaper.

The library examines user trends in the local population and has small, developing book collections in French, Russian, and Spanish to reflect demand.

C. Literacy

The number of Arlington patrons whose native language is not English has increased in recent years and the library has developed a special collection for users and tutors. The library buys books and audiovisual materials to support the educational, informational and career goals of our literacy patrons. Special focus is on ELL (English Language Learner) materials on all levels for reading, writing, test preparation for citizenship and the

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). Other topics include but are not limited to literature, leisure reading, life skills, and American History.

D. Circulating Art Print Collection

The purpose of the circulating art print collection is to provide framed artwork for home and/or office for the enjoyment of users. Art prints representing a variety of artistic styles and tastes will be considered for acquisition. Art reproductions of works by artists prominent in the history of art as well as currently popular graphic art, poster art and photography will be purchased. Consideration will be given to the quality of the reproduction frame size, and current home decorating trends. No one artist, period or style should be given special emphasis in the collection.

E. Winfield Robbins Art Print Collection

The Print Collection is the vision of Winfield Robbins (1841-1910) who donated many works of art to the Library. The vast majority of the prints are European and American portraits with some landscapes and other compositions. There are engravings, etchings, aquatints, woodcuts mezzotints and some steel engravings, among other formats. The collection is believed to contain approximately 100,000 prints, 10,000 of which are cataloged. A selection of prints is often on display in the upper rotunda and the conference room.

X Children's Materials

Staff qualified by education and experience is responsible for the selection and evaluation of the children's collection. This includes both book and non-print materials.

Materials are chosen for children from birth to about age 12 as well as for parents, teachers and caregivers. The library serves the recreational and popular interests of children and also serves as a complement and support to the school curriculum.

A. Non-Fiction

Non-fiction for children is selected to serve the varied informational needs and demands of children from pre-school to grade 6. Particular attention is paid to providing materials that complement the curriculum in the elementary schools.

B. Fiction

Fiction materials are selected in specific formats that suit different ages.

C. Picture Books

These are generally designed for adults to read to children. The illustrations are a predominant feature. Some picture books are designed specifically to appeal to older children and depending on their subject content may be shelved with other parts of the collection. (Recently this has seemed to be a trend in publishing).

D. Easy Readers

These are selected for children who are learning to read. They usually have a controlled vocabulary, large print and page layout that enhance the flow of sentences. They still have plenty of illustrations.

D. Fiction – often referred to as “Chapter books”

These are selected to appeal to the interests and experiences in second through seventh grade. The content is age appropriate and choices are made from well-known review sources.

E. Paperbacks

A variety of popular titles of fiction at all reading levels are purchased in paperback format. Usually books in series are purchased in paperback.

G. Parent’s Collection

Books are selected for adults dealing with children (parents and caregivers). Topics covered are growth and development and education. We strive to have books on timely topics. Picture books regarding discussion topics for adults and children are also available. Topics may include: death, divorce, learning disabilities, bullying, etc.

H. Periodicals

A collection of the most popular and educational titles of general interest is maintained.

I. Non-print Materials

Multi-media kits, computer games, toys, and games are collected.

J. DVDs

The collection of DVDs for children is selected for entertainment and also for educational topics intended to satisfy the curiosity of children up to the age of 12.

K. Sound recordings

Selections of stories, music and songs that are enjoyed by children from infants to age 12 are made. They are purchased in CD format.

L. Books on CD/Playaways

Selections for this collection are carefully made from well-reviewed sources of the best in literature for children from about grades one through seven.

M. Kits

This collection includes CDs with an accompanying book of fiction, folk and fairy tales, biographies and language learning. With the language kits we try to reflect some of the variety of languages used in the area.

N. Software

This collection contains software for the education and entertainment of preschoolers through grade 6 students.

O. Video Games

The Library collects a limited amount of games to be played on current electronic gaming devices. The games are appropriate in content for infants to age 12.

XI Relationship between the Main Library and the Fox Library

The Fox Branch Librarian follows the guidelines set forth by the Collection Development Policy listed above, and is responsible for the purchasing and evaluation of the materials that the Fox Library provides. This includes a variety of content for adults, teens, and children in the neighboring community.

Selection usually emphasizes standard works in major fields of knowledge, basic reference materials, general periodicals and a current browsing collection for all ages. Provision of materials for in-depth reference is the responsibility of the Main Library.

Whenever the branch is unable to supply an individual request, it has access to the Main Library collection and to the Minuteman Library Network. In adapting the branch collection to the needs of the area it serves, the branch will occasionally purchase titles and material not included in the collection of the Main Library. The Fox Library also provides a small selection of fiction and non-fiction books and multimedia geared to the teen population.

The Fox Library is also home to a considerable collection for children, which includes an array of materials geared to children from birth to age twelve. The Fox Branch Librarian, qualified by education and experience, selects these materials. As is the case with the adult collection, whenever the branch is unable to supply a child's individual request, staff will refer the patron to the Main Library.

XII Gifts and Memorials

The library accepts monetary gifts intended for the purchase of library materials when donors' intentions for the gifts and the library's collection objectives are consistent.

When the library receives a cash gift for the purchase of materials, whether as a memorial or for any other purpose, the general nature or subject area of the materials to be purchased will be based upon the wishes of the donor. The library staff in accordance with the needs and selection policies of the library, however, will select specific titles. Donors also have the option of contributing to an endowment fund maintained by the library. Persons who pay for gift books will have the names—and the name of the person in whose honor or memory the book is purchased—entered on a library bookplate to be placed in the book. The library will send a card to whomever the donor of a memorial gift specifies.

Once the library accepts a gift or donation that item becomes the property of the library and becomes subject to the same use or disposal criteria as all other items.

All donations will be governed by the Donor Policy.

Adopted by The Board of Trustees 12/10/13.